

1. An access device for positioning within a body lumen, which comprises:

an access member including an outer wall defining an internal lumen, the access member having a longitudinal axis and proximal and distal ends, the outer wall defining a window adjacent the distal end in communication with the internal lumen for permitting surgical instrumentation to enter therethrough, the access member having a cross-sectional dimension transverse to the longitudinal axis and a rigidity sufficient to stabilize the body lumen upon positioning therein to maintain patency of the body lumen.

3. The access device according to claim 1, including a housing mounted to the access member for facilitating manipulation about an operative site.

firing the anastomosis instrument to connect the first and second intestinal sections to re-establish continuity between the first and second intestinal sections.

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opening in the abdominal wall and a second intestinal section which extends to a rectal opening, comprising the steps of:

positioning an access device within the opening in the abdominal wall and advancing the access device within the first intestinal section;

manipulating the second intestinal section to a position in proximity to the first intestinal section;

introducing a guide within the rectal opening and advancing the guide through the second intestinal section;

passing the guide through the second intestinal section and into the first intestinal section;

advancing the guide through a lumen of the access device and out the opening in the abdominal wall;

removing the access device; connecting an anvil to the guide;

withdrawing the guide through the rectal opening to advance the anvil within the first intestinal section;

introducing an anastomosis instrument within the rectal opening and into the second intestinal section;

connecting the anvil to the anastomosis instrument; and

firing the anastomosis instrument to connect the first and second intestinal sections to re-establish continuity between the first and second intestinal sections.

6. The surgical procedure according to claim 5 wherein the access device includes an outer wall and a window defined in the outer wall in communication with the lumen of the access device and wherein the step of advancing the guide includes initially introducing the guide into the window of the access device.

7. The surgical procedure according to claim 5, including the step of introducing a cannulated needle within the rectal opening to access the first intestinal section.

8. The surgical procedure according to claim 7 wherein the step of introducing a guide includes advancing the guide through the cannulated needle and into the first intestinal section.

9. The surgical procedure according to claim 8 wherein the step of introducing a cannulated needle is performed under laparoscopic visualization.

10. The surgical procedure according to claim 5 wherein the anastomosis instrument is a circular anastomosis instrument and wherein during the step of firing the anastomosis instrument, a circular array of stapler is driven through tissue margins of the first and second intestinal section.

11. The surgical procedure according to claim 10 wherein the anastomosis instrument includes a circular knife and wherein during the step of firing the circular knife pierces tissue of the first and second intestinal portions to define an annular opening therethrough.